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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/911,811

07/24/2001

Ulrich Hetzer

P01,0236

6272

26574

7590

07/06/2009

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EXAMINER

LIANG, LEONARD S

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2853

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

07/06/2009

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

1 RECORD OF ORAL HEARING

2  
3 UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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5  
6 BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS  
7 AND INTERFERENCES

8  
9  
10 *Ex Parte* ULRICH HETZER, JAN KEUNECKE,  
11 TORSTEN SCHLAAFF, and GEORGE G. GELFER

12  
13  
14 Appeal 2009-003218  
15 Application 09/911,811  
16 Technology Center 2800

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18  
19 Oral Hearing Held: June 9, 2009

20  
21  
22 Before JOSEPH F. RUGGIERO, MASHID D. SAADAT, and  
23 ROBERT E. NAPPI, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

24  
25 ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLANTS:

26 Steven H. Noll, Esquire  
27 SCHIFF HARDIN, LLP  
28 6600 Sears Tower  
29 Chicago, IL 60606  
30

31 The above-entitled matter came on for hearing on Tuesday, June 9,  
32 2009, commencing at 9:00 a.m., at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office,  
33 600 Dulany Street, 9th Floor, Alexandria, Virginia, before Jack L. Becker,  
34 Notary Public.

1 MS. BOBO-ALLEN: Calendar No. 11, Appeal No. 2009-3218. Mr.  
2 Noll.

3 JUDGE RUGGIERO: Good morning.

4 MR. NOLL: Good morning. This is the first time I ever started off an  
5 appeal hearing with an apology, but I do wish to apologize for taking your  
6 time twice on these two related cases. It was my intention originally or my  
7 expectation that they would be consolidated, since they are method and  
8 apparatus claims, and I expected that we would have one hearing on both,  
9 but for reasons I can't explain, the Examiner took a year longer to write his  
10 Answer in this case than he did in other one, and that has resulted, as you  
11 know, in your making a decision on the method claims that were previously  
12 before you in which you affirmed the Examiner.

13 So the question is obviously why shouldn't that be controlling, and  
14 why am I even here? And I thought long and hard about that, and there's  
15 actually two reasons. The first is the reason we have two separate cases is  
16 that the Examiner did impose a restriction requirement, and of course the  
17 basis of the restriction requirement is that the claims are patentably distinct  
18 or, or represent patentably distinct inventions. So that being the case, that  
19 certainly doesn't preclude you from relying on the previous decision as  
20 being dispositive for these claims, these apparatus claims, but it doesn't  
21 require it either. So I thought it was worthwhile to revisit at least a couple  
22 issues.

23 And the other factor was in the decision in the method claims, at the  
24 bottom of page 7, there's a footnote that says we make the observation that  
25 although Appellants argue the alleged lack of ambient temperature sense

1 condition data in Smith, that's also one of the references in the present  
2 appeal, there is no ambient temperature condition recited in independent  
3 claim 1. So that caused me to think that at least one basis for the decision on  
4 the method claims may have been that the claiming of the sensing of the  
5 ambient temperature was not clearly -- expressed clearly enough in those  
6 method claims. In contrast to that, I think that is explicitly present in our  
7 apparatus claims on appeal that not only claim the sensor but claim the  
8 control unit as being programmed to make use of the sensed ambient  
9 temperature.

10 As in the previous appeal, previous appeal, however, the, the basic  
11 contention or the basic difference of opinion that we have with the Examiner  
12 is that we believe the Smith and Kneezel references only provide generalized  
13 teachings of concepts that may have been sufficient to sustain the rejection  
14 of the method claims, but here where we're claiming an apparatus, we  
15 believe there has to be sufficient guidance even in view of the most recent  
16 KSR decision to at least provide some algorithmic instruction as to how  
17 you're going to use the sensed ambient temperature in combination with  
18 these other two determinations that are among the three that are listed in  
19 independent claim 1.

20 We believe the Smith references teaches only sensing the temperature  
21 of the print head itself and does not disclose exactly how that is used in a  
22 warm-up cycle for operating the print head or operating the printer. From  
23 our point of view, the Smith reference just has this block with an input  
24 where the temperature TS goes in, and you get an output that says warm-up  
25

1 pulses or warm-up cycle. We don't find any specific disclosure in that  
2 reference as to how the print head block temperature is used at all.

3       That being the case, when we turn to the Kneezel reference, which of  
4 course we acknowledge discloses teaching ambient temperature, even if a  
5 person of ordinary skill had the insight to make use of ambient temperature  
6 in the Smith reference, we submit that when such a person turned to the  
7 Smith reference, there wouldn't be any guidance on how to use it. It could  
8 be equally possible that you would just substitute ambient temperature, as  
9 disclosed in Kneezel, for the print head temperature disclosed in Smith. If  
10 you did that, then there's no more guidance to be found in the Smith  
11 reference than is present with regard to how you use the print head  
12 temperature. If you have the further insight to make use of ambient  
13 temperature in addition to the sensed temperature, the print head temperature  
14 that's disclosed in Smith, then from our point of view, there is even further  
15 speculation involved. It's not even clear that the Smith reference would  
16 operate or how it would operate if you were -- had more than one  
17 temperature as an input.

18       So from our point of view, we don't disagree that the Examiner has  
19 correctly identified the individual teachings of Smith and Kneezel, but we  
20 believe that the application of those teachings to read such a combination on  
21 independent claim 1 that's on appeal is speculation and has been the result of  
22 the Examiner being guided by her own specification.

23       So I won't take more of your time, because we have been through this  
24 once before already, but I would be glad to respond to any questions.

25       JUDGE NAPPI: Any questions? Anything?

1 JUDGE SAADAT: No questions.

2 JUDGE RUGGIERO: No.

3 JUDGE NAPPI: I don't think we have any questions.

4 MR. NOLL: Thank you.

5 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded at 10:37 a.m. on June 9, 2009.)

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